

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STOCKH 02425 081528Z
ACTION EUR-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 2425

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SW
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH ECONOMICS MINISTER BOHMAN

1. DURING FLAG DAY RECEPTION JUNE 6 AT THE PALACE,
CHARGE HAD OPPORTUNITY FOR PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH
ECONOMICS MINISTER (AND HEAD OF MODERATE PARTY) GOSTA
BOHMAN. MAIN TOPIC WAS NUCLEAR POWER ISSUE IN SWEDEN,
WHICH OBVIOUSLY PREOCCUPIES THE GOVERNMENT GREATLY.

2. BOHMAN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE ISSUE WAS TERRIBLY
DIFFICULT ONE FOR THE GOVERNING COALITION. WHEN CHARGE
SAID WE WISHED THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT WELL, BUT HAD
BEEN WATCHING THEIR HANDLING OF THE SWEDISH NUCLEAR
POWER ISSUE WITH SOME CONCERN AS TO THE OUTCOME, BOHMAN
ADMNTTED THAT THE GOING HAD NOT BEEN EASY, AND THAT
SOME HARD DECISIONS HAD TO BE FACED BY THE FALL OF 1978
IF NOT BEFORE. HE SAID THAT DEALING WITH PRIME MINISTER
FALLDIN ON NUCLEAR ENERGY WAS QUITE AN EXPERIENCE,
BECAUSE FALLDIN HAD SOME VERY CLEAR IDEAS OF PRINCIPLE
THAT HE WOULD NOT RELINQUISH; AND BOHMAN SAID HE THOUGHT
FALLDIN'S PARTNERS HAD NOW REALIZED THAT MUCH OF FALLDIN'S
CONCERN WAS LEGITIMATE AND HAD TO BE FACED.

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3. AT THE SAME TIME, BOHMAN SAID HE FELT PUBLIC OPINION
WAS BECOMING MORE ENLIGHTENED ON NUCLEAR MATTERS,
GRADUALLY LEARNING THAT CERTAIN RISKS COULD BE ACCEPTED
IF THE NEED WAS GREAT ENOUGH. CHARGE NOTED THAT FALLDIN
HAD TOLD MARQUIS CHILDS THAT IF REFERENDUM WERE HELD, HE
TOUGHT MAJORITY WOULD OPT FOR HIS POSITION. BOHMAN

SAID IN FACT REFERENDUM, IF HELD, WOULD NOT BE SIMPLE "YES" OR "NO" TO NUCLEAR POWER, BUT WOULD HAVE SMALL VS. LARGE OPTION, HE THOUGHT; AND HE BELIEVED PUBLIC OPINION WAS MATURING ON THE ISSUE SO THAT SOME RISK WOULD BE ACCEPTED. HE ALSO ALLUDED TO PROBLEMS CAUSED BY US POLICY AND NEED TO FIND MUTUALLY AGREEABLE SOLUTION. IN SUM, BOHMAN GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE NUCLEAR DILEMMA HERE, WHILE STILL POSING A GRAVE POLITICAL CHALLENGE, WAS NOT BEYOND A SOLUTION.

4. BOHMAN SAID PLEASANT THINGS ABOUT HIS SPRING VISIT TO THE US AND SAID HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO HIS NEXT TRIP IN SEPTEMBER. HE DID SAY THAT HE HAD BEEN DISCOURAGED SOMEWHAT THAT THE US ECONOMY WAS NOT TURNING UP MORE. HE SAID HE HAD FOUND OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK IN US ON PART OF ARTHUR BURNS AND OTHERS, BUT WAS NOT SURE THEY WOULD BE AS OPTIMISTIC NOW. CHARGE SAID THE INFORMATION HE GOT STILL REFLECTED A HEALTHY AMOUNT OF OFFICIAL OPTIMISM. COMMENT: RECALLING THAT FALLDIN TOLD CHILDS HOW CLOSELY THEY WATCHED THE STOCK MARKET, IT MAY BE THAT BOHMAN HAS THE SAME HABIT. WE WILL LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE BOHMAN WITH FACTUAL DATA ABOUT THE STATE OF THE US ECONOMY.
PERRY

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